

Museum, and in adding to it her own most inspiring and educative *Book of Centuries*. This is a very valuable asset, and I hope Miss Parish will show you some books done by the children of an L.C.C. school which afford both delight and impulse. But how incomplete would be any attempt to record the work of students without mentioning the labours of a lady whom we may not in the circumstances name, but whose P.U.S. propaganda, in which Miss Wix joined later with perhaps equal success, is amongst the most successful and delightful with which any reform movement could be blessed. I may not venture to say a word about the personal qualities which make each of these ladies a *persona grata* wherever she goes. You must get the tale from themselves, and also get from Miss Wix some account of her very important Sunday School campaign.

Truly you who belong to the House of Education are citizens of no mean city. Freely you have received and most liberally have you given. And the secret of this fine roll of work and workers is, I think, your loyalty to your old College. Pass it on, keep us bound together with one heart and one purpose; make it known to every new student in the future that she is entering on a heart service to which she must give herself up with full faith; that there cannot be affection and disaffection, the two will not go together; that, seeing that we do not live always in the kingdom of heaven, there are sure to be small matters for criticism, but that for her own sake she had better not let her attention or her talk dwell upon these; for loyalty is the hall-mark of character, and while we live in this world we must needs give our loyalty in generous excess of the deserts of that to which we are loyal.

You have held up our hands in the past; never has a student failed to do the thing she has been asked to do for the common good. You have sent us your sisters and your pupils to be trained; in fact your zeal and your enthusiasm keep the College going; and believe me this fine loyalty of yours is, if not the white flower of a blameless life, at any rate as fair a decoration as is given to any of us to bear.

I am afraid I have written you a very long letter, but how long I should have made it if I had said all there is to be said!

So wishing you a very happy Conference, very happy hours up here in this beautiful school which Mr. Lewis has been kind enough to put at your disposal, happy hours at Scale How, gay and happy hours in the open, and enrichment for the days to come,

I remain, your always loving and grateful friend,

CHARLOTTE MASON.

P.S.—One of your number, Mrs. Brittlebank, wrote to me some time ago offering a very important suggestion and one which is supported by Old Girls in the school. Both students and old pupils seem to think that a regulated course of reading such as that offered in programme VI, only with more modern books also, would be of use. Our kind friend Mrs. Franklin and I were talking the matter over the other day and sketching a scheme which I hope you will hear more of later.

## LETTERS.

Scale How,  
May, 1919.

DEAR EX-STUDENTS,

As we go about the quiet and pleasant work of the Summer term we can hardly believe that only a fortnight ago we were in the middle of Conference week. Scale How felt strangely empty after you had all gone, but the place soon turned its thoughts from your departure to the time (two years hence?) when it will greet you all again.

The weather promises us some happy "long halves." We hope to go and see for ourselves some of the places which Dr. Hough showed us with his lantern slides one evening last term. By means of a lantern he introduced us to some beautiful places which we dare not hope to go and see from Scale How, but to others which we ought to, we can and we will visit before we leave. He gave us a most enjoyable and even exciting evening, for he had arranged a competition in which we named the places as he showed them to us on the screen. The people who recognized most photographs were presented with prizes—pictures of lakeland scenes.

We had some interesting criticism lessons last term. At one of them, in reply to a criticism which said that the class did not seem to do enough work (it was a history lesson), Miss Mason asked which of the critics could narrate the lesson which had been given with all dates, names, etc. No one volunteered.

Miss Mason showed us that the clear narration of things read or heard is the true work of the mind. We must not think that because this work is done easily and invisibly that it is not true work. "Prove that it is real work by doing it yourselves. It is not the question which Miss Jones asks Mary Robinson that makes Mary work, but the question which Mary Robinson asks Mary Robinson." Miss Mason said that we must all be Mary Robinsons! The best work is not visible, does not employ the reasoning here, the imagination there. It employs the whole mind, for the mind is a whole, not a parcel of faculties. Narration is such work, and we must not think that because all seems to go easily and that no effort is being put forth, the mind is not hard at work. It is, and in such a way that knowledge will infallibly result.

It is so easy to forget that narration is hard work. At another crit. we were again reminded of it by the class (IIa) becoming very weary. Miss Mason pointed out that all labour is profitable until the body is tired, and that though the spirit never tires the brain does readily. We were warned that for this reason a lesson should never outlive its allotted time. Though the interest of the class were as keen as at the beginning of the lesson, we must not go on beyond the time, and if we notice signs of weariness before the end of a lesson it is best to stop and go to something else.

After a geography lesson to Class IV, we realized that in the



P.U.S. we learn geographical facts not by abstract teaching but incidentally. The lesson was given upon Egypt, and the delta of the Nile as a geographical feature should have been incidentally learned in a way that could not be forgotten. Each geography lesson should give an opportunity of such incidental teaching of geographical ideas. By this means the P.U.S. dispenses with the old-fashioned lesson on, say, "the Delta," in the abstract. Our object in teaching geography is that the children should have, before they leave the school, a clear idea or picture of every place and of every geographical principle of the world in which they live.

The gardening mistress has turned her attention to the botanical gardens, which have been neglected since the war. They are to be trenched and replanted, so we hope that there will be some cool days this term.

We feel that we are able this time to end our letter more sincerely and affectionately yours,

THE PRESENT STUDENTS.

DEAR EDITOR,

Students will like to know that when expenses for stationery and postage, amounting to £2 10s. 6d., had been deducted, Miss Wix and I were able to send £58 5s. to the Gates Memorial Fund from Scale How students, past and present.—Yours sincerely,

ELLEN A. PARISH.

### "MIKADO" VERSE.

All people who insist on walking  
Upstairs in their outdoor shoes,  
I send to sweep  
The rubbish heap  
With a brush that they always lose.  
And those who laugh and chatter and giggle,  
Long after ten fifteen,  
"For the children's sake"  
I keep them awake  
With a Singer's sewing machine.

All people whose loud vociferous voices  
Echo upon the stairs,  
By my constitutions  
Propose resolutions  
In voices that nobody hears!  
And if I hear a student say  
That she's got too much to do  
I've made a rule  
That she runs a school,  
A canteen and a hospital too.

Chorus—"My object all sublime."

### SOME ACCOUNT OF THE STUDENTS' CONFERENCE AT AMBLESIDE.

It would, I think, be very easy to write rapturously of the illimitable joy that most of us felt at being again in Ambleside, or wistfully of classroom doors now shut to us for ever.

But I would rather speak of a certain comfortable peace and a sense of great fitness in our presence there, as though we had only returned after a short holiday. And I suppose that even 26 years is as a short holiday, compared with the years of long and lusty life before the P.U. Prophetically one is tempted to exclaim with Macbeth: "What! will the line stretch out to the crack of doom?"

This year we were most kindly allowed the use of the Grammar School for the meetings. Its site is fine, and symbolic; it stands high on a terrace overlooking lake and village. There, in a pleasant and lofty classroom, some ninety of us met on Thursday morning (April 24th).

Miss Mason's letter of greeting was followed by papers on "The Art of living in Other People's Houses" by Mrs. Shelley and Miss Britten. In the discussion afterwards, there was an attempt to combat the largest and fiercest of the lions that beset the governess-path, viz. "How to avoid undertaking more tasks than are perfectly consonant with the art of being the perfect and typical governess."

Summed up, the rules offered by the experienced for the guidance of the inexperienced appear to be:

- (1) Have regular free times, and see that you use them.
- (2) Have plenty of healthy interest and activities outside your work.
- (3) And if these be outside the house (preferably definite social work) so much the better.

Where these fail, the magic wand "Straight Talk," waved over the head, or rapped over the knuckles of a refractory postess, is said to work wonders.

And for those to whom mending, washing, cooking, gardening, grooming, chimney-sweeping, white-washing, dressmaking, or cobbling for the children's sake, seem an indignity, Miss E. C. Allen suggested that the delightfully comprehensive euphemisms "Care of the Health" and "Taking an intelligent interest in the family life" would at least cast a glamour and a dignity over humdrum tasks; thus reminding us of the fact that a rose would not smell so sweet if we had to call it a turnip, while a turnip, if we called it a rose, would fill the air with freshest fragrance.

Thursday afternoon.

Miss Williams conducted a party through Rydal to Buckstone's Jum, in company with a compass, an aneroid barometer, some maps and a small box containing specimens of volcanic rock.



Arrived at the Jum, we, the children, sat happily on the rocks, while the teacher spoke of all that a geographical sense can discover about a place when we have merely looked at it. In this case the children could see mountains, and were naturally curious as to how they were formed, and they wanted to know of what rock they are composed; they could see the little Rydal Beck, and were interested to notice the power water has of carving its way through rock; the form of the valley, and its name (Fairfield Basin) also called for comment; the shapes of the different peaks, and the probability of glacial action being the cause of those shapes—the marks left by the passage of a glacier, moraines and scratched rock—all these points, so fascinating to hungry and enquiring minds, were dealt with happily by Miss Williams.

There was at the same time a "Nature Walk" conducted by Miss Claxton, to which the other half of the "Conference" went. I am told that Brathay was the direction, and that many pleasant things were seen and heard and enjoyed. The open discussion for students took place in the evening of this day. This was led by Mrs. Gould with the suggestion that a standard of personal attainments (say that of the "Senior Locals") reached by each student either before or during her college career, perhaps on the same lines as Miss Mason is adopting for the Probationary Class, would help towards raising the standard of P.U. children in such subjects as mathematics and French—subjects in which students as a body, and consequently their pupils, are weak. [This last statement is substantiated by the examiner's report on the December examinations.]

Mrs. Gould also reminded us that unless students have taken the London Matriculation (or one of its alternatives) they will be debarred from teaching in Elementary Schools; a drawback which might hamper our forward movement in this direction.

[A suggestion that not-too-young students might, in the leisure of their posts, cram for this examination met with small response.]

Mrs. Gould concluded by asking that time should be given students for private study while at College.

Miss Parish (who took the chair) said in reply that a standard of efficiency in these subjects—i.e., French and Mathematics, was unnecessary, as the children who would be most concerned (presumably those over 13) were able to teach themselves. She combated the notion that students could, during their college life, be privately coached in weak subjects, as this would obviously require a larger staff than at present exists. Miss Parish added that it was possible for ex-students who were dissatisfied with existing conditions and wished to improve these, to leave the Union.

[There was some objection to the use of the unfortunate word "efficiency," heard a good many times in the course of the discussion—as savouring unpleasantly of German ideals.]

On Friday morning papers were read by Miss J. R. Smith and Miss Moffatt on "How to keep up to date."

Points agreed upon after discussion were:

1. That holiday courses should be held or attended at different

centres, for which students in various parts of the country offered to act as secretaries. These holiday courses should in each centre embrace subjects most desired by the students in that centre.

[Here Miss Pennethorne urged the importance of attending educational conferences of other bodies, in the missionary spirit.]

2. That book clubs might be formed for the reading of modern books; and several methods were discussed.

3. That magazine clubs might also be formed, for the reading of the more out-of-the-way magazines, such as *Cornhill*, *Blackwood's* or *Hibbert's Journal*.

The only question asked after Miss Wix's interesting talk on Elementary Schools was: What authorities must be propitiated before such schools can join the P.U.? The answer came that it is necessary in every case to get the *permission of the governing body*—the wishes of the headmaster count for nothing.

The meeting then broke up, and the ninety hungry ones "with the name printed clearly on each," rolled down the hill to be fed, returning almost immediately to be photographed in beautiful and typical surroundings.

At the afternoon session Miss E. Kitching's paper on "Bird Study" was read and greatly enjoyed. There were some questions concerning good books on birds, the sea-shore and mosses, etc.

The Peace memorial discussion occupied the hours from 8-10.

The seven proposals set forth in the papers sent last March to every student were dealt with. Only over the merits and demerits of a library and a bursary was there any discussion, during which it was suggested that Miss Mason might damn a library as a fleshpot of Egypt. It is true that Miss Mason often speaks of books as food for the mind, but we have never yet heard her allude to "The Library" as "The Fleshpot"!

The votes for the bursary heavily outnumbered those for the fleshpot—I mean library.

Miss E. C. Allen then asked students to air their views with regard to the "Portfolio of Painting," and explained why she now divided the seniors and the juniors each into three sections—to enable each child to see her own drawings with the criticisms thereon, before starting the next subject.

Drawings may be done with or without the use of the pencil, at discretion. Miss Allen aims at getting the children to draw from life.

Fuller criticisms of the younger children's work were asked for.

Saturday.

The chief question raised after the reading of Miss Bowser's paper on Physical Training was whether a specialist should be responsible for the training of students as was the case some years ago.

An attractive demonstration of House of Education Drills (and dancing) by the present students followed.

In the afternoon, the "Bird Walk," conducted by Miss E. Kitching, to Waterhead Marshes, was a fruitful one. [Miss



Kitching showed her birdmap of the marshes and suggested that each of us might make one of our own district.]

The hen swan was sitting on her nest, while the mate swam angrily, or perhaps warningly, towards the crowd that seemed to threaten her.

Just as the party was leaving the marshes, a dipper and a kingfisher most benevolently appeared—for without them a Scale How bird walk is not a proper bird walk.

Between the hours 4-6, "St. George's" was more than crowded, when the Students' Association was "At home to Miss Mason and all at Scale How." This was our first opportunity of seeing the staff and Miss Mason, who spoke a few kind words to each. One felt touched at being remembered, and grateful. And Miss Mason did not let us leave Ambleside without another little talk with each.

The present students had successfully "furniture-freaked" the classroom into a drawing-room, and there, after a sumptuous supper, we were entertained by a musical programme so various that several items had to stand over till Sunday afternoon. The present students had hit upon a delightful peripatetic plan, by which we were to walk from room to room to hear the different items. It was, perhaps, a little disappointing not to have had an organ recital in the "boot-holes" or a bassoon solo in the bath-room. But, at any rate, many of us begin at last to understand what is meant by a promenade concert.

Sunday, by Miss Mason's most abounding hospitality and the kind forethought of the house-keeper, Miss Crawshaw, we were enabled to spend almost entirely at Scale How. And thanks, too, to the hundreds of poor little pigs and beeves that must have been slain to feed the bodies (and therefore the minds) of those ninety students. The S.M.'s were congregated at Miss Mason's table, and the J.M.'s were whisked away I know not whither. [Both S.M.'s and J.M.'s were subsequently entertained in what each one may or may not be blamed for still considering as her own room.]

Mr. Lewis in the sermon which he preached on the text, "In the morning sow the seed and in the evening withhold not thine hand," earned the disapproval of some students by his use of the word "drudgery" in connection with the work of a teacher. It seemed to me that he did not minimize the happiness of the teacher's lot, nor the joy that comes of watching sensible progress on the path to God—but that he sought rather to encourage those whose high ideals for the little ones in their charge, and for themselves as fellow-pilgrims, make them all the more conscious at times of deep failure. It is at such times that our poor human impatience makes even loved work seem as drudgery; for in proportion as our ideals are high shall we run the temptation of regarding our measure of success as failure. Mr. Lewis's words on this subject were meant not for the ninety and nine who are not prone to this temptation, and are consistently lovely and beautiful in righteousness, but to comfort the one lonely sinner who is apt to forget that the road to the great success is marked by milestones which only man calls failure. At the end of the

road One looks and smiles, for He knows. If only we knew a little more, we too would never forget to smile.

In the afternoon we assembled in the classroom for "Meds." "Inspiration" was the subject of Miss Mason's talk, which began with a reference to the "Descent of the Holy Ghost" (on the walls of the Spanish chapel at St. Maria Novella). Thence Miss Mason spoke of the inspiration of John the Baptist; of his humility, which yet was not perfect humility, for in speaking of Christ's greatness he used himself as a standard of comparison, placing himself next to Christ: "He is preferred before me"; and of his failure completely to trust Christ: "Art thou He that should come, or look we for another?" And yet Jesus trusted John.

Miss Mason read from *The Saviour of the World* the passage beginning "What went ye out into the wilderness for to see." She pointed out to us the wonderful poetry of Christ's words.

It was with a genuine student-feeling that we met in the classroom on Monday to hear the capital lessons of Miss Pennethorne and Miss Curry.

Miss Pennethorne's lesson on geography was illuminating and illuminated and served to show (amongst other things) the all-embracing nature of geography, who boasts as children or close relations nearly a dozen other 'graphies or 'ologies.

Miss Curry's sympathetic lesson on "Sound" to three little girls in Form II was delightful to children of older years. But I wonder if we could have narrated as well? From both these lessons we learnt much, and are grateful, as children always are for pleasant knowledge pleasantly given.

The morning closed with a little talk from Miss Mason. I can only try to mention a few of the ideas it embodied:—

Miss Mason spoke of the subtle danger of allowing the teacher's personality to creep between the child and the subject he is to master, and begged us, especially in lessons of literary value, not to talk too much. She warned us against the spirit of academic pride abroad in the world to-day, and suggested that "Pelmanism" is a sign of the failure of this type of education.

The new "Leaving certificate" for girls passing out of Form VI, and the matriculation class for probationary students that Miss Mason is forming at Scale How, are to a large extent preventive measures. It is not a case of a sop to Cerberus, it is on the contrary a means of enabling our girls to continue their education along the liberal lines of the P.U. almost to the limit of their school days, the final examination thus needing very little special work.

Miss Mason deprecated the idea that any zealous reformers should wish to put the hands of the clock back.

She spoke of the amazing work which has been done in the Elementary Schools since the last Ambleside Conference, when, indeed, there were no elementary schools with us. At this moment there are some ninety schools working with wonderful success on our lines, and following the programmes more or less fully.



The large size of the classes, which was at first thought to be an almost impossible stumbling block, has been no drawback.

Perhaps the greatest compliment that could be paid to any reformer was couched in the words of an eminent educationist, who, speaking of the introduction of the P.U. into the schools, is reported to have said: "I will fight this method tooth and nail."

At the Association meeting in the afternoon, Miss Gray gave a short history of the Association.

In reply to the question whether anything could be done to make the meetings in London more helpful, Mrs. Gould suggested that some definite subject might be chosen for discussion, etc.; possibly on the lines of a "Drawing-room Evening." This would be especially valuable if it bore on the term's work. The proposal met with hearty approval.

Miss Bernau offered to take a party of students round the British Museum—an offer that was accepted with acclamation.

Miss Gray asked that, in order to represent a larger number of years, there may be nine members on the Committee instead of seven as hitherto.

Miss J. R. Smith, speaking of the PIANTA, urged that more articles be sent in. She wished to start a page for debate, and to revive the "confessions," stipulating that students be allowed to send these in anonymously if they wished.

Miss Parish said that the *Children's Quarterly* was some pounds in debt and would probably have to be discontinued. But on Miss Bernau promising to secure a number of new adherents, she hoped to be able to continue it, at any rate for a time.

#### *Book of Centuries.*

Miss Bernau showed several charming "Books of Centuries," those done by herself and Miss Flewker being specially interesting.

In answer to a question of finding time, Miss Bernau said that she allowed her children to do their drawings while she read *Plutarch's Lives*—the pencils being of course laid down during narration—and found that this answered well. The children also worked in their books during the week-end. Miss Bernau gave addresses of books for helpful illustrations, and reminded us that only copies of work executed during the period studied should be made. It is better not to paste pictures in, as the books thus tend to grow too bulky.

The evening was marked by a performance of the "Mikado" which was most simply and prettily staged. If special vote of thanks be due, it should be given to that most indefatigable executioner and to the stage manager.

#### *Tuesday (in the classroom).*

Two points of interest were raised by Miss Millar's paper on the "P.U.S. Ideal," viz., narration, and the teaching of mathematics. With regard to the former, those who find a difficulty in getting little ones to narrate, were advised to begin, perhaps, by reading only one sentence.

The mathematical problem—how to raise the standard of the P.U. child to that of the elementary school child, without encroach-

ing on the time given to necessary literary studies—seemed unsolvable. But some useful hints were given: e.g., the necessity of insisting on accuracy from the pupil; the careful adoption by the teacher of the best methods only; and the advisability of revising old work in turns with the new. "Criticism Lessons" were given by present students on Latin (2nd form); arithmetic (4th form), and the Army (5th form)—after which the party started for a picnic towards Easedale Tarn, returning to the Moss Grove Hotel for tea.

In the evening there was a fancy dress dance, where gorgeous East touched West, where fact and rainbow-hued fancy jostled each other—all seizing the chance that offered for a riot of wonderful colour.

The singing of Auld Lang Syne, more than a mere convention to us, brought the evening and, indeed, the Conference to a close.

I think we all felt most grateful to the committee for the able way in which they arranged and carried out the programme.

If one may venture a criticism, it would be that perhaps the discussions might have been more profitable if less time had been lost over irrelevant matter. But everyone knows how hard it is to avoid doing this, and no doubt experience in such matters is the thing that counts. In conferring we learn how to confer; the experience that to-day's conference has brought us will be of great service in to-morrow's.

A. DRAKE BROCKMAN.

## THE ART OF LIVING IN OTHER PEOPLE'S HOUSES.

### I.

"Self-knowledge teaches us that what is true of everybody else is true of us also." The truth of this quotation from *Ourselves* is, I think, of the greatest value when we are considering how to live in other people's houses.

Our postesses suffer all the tremors and more than we do when we start on our adventure into the unknown. When we have earned their friendship they tell us their fears and how they asked themselves, Will she be haughty or flighty—too chatty or dumb? Will she make difficulties with the servants and, oh dear, there is nurse, she is a dear, but she can be difficult. Will she fit into our ways without expecting to be with us always? I am not holding a brief for parents, but I think it is a help to remember that their difficulties at the start are the same as ours.

It is well, I find, to have a definite though not rigid plan of campaign. We are all agreed that our first duty is to the children, and we have to arrange our lives so that we are not stale or tired when with them, and for my part I aim at two things.

1. To have some time alone each day—the time after dinner if possible. Of course, we are required sometimes in the evening to



play or dance or to take our turn with aged or trying visitors, and I think we should so bear ourselves that our postesses take it for granted that we are to be relied on to help her on occasions. It is not necessary to join all the walks and excursions the children take with the parents or others, however open-hearted they are in inviting us and desiring us to join them. When it is practicable I go to a church other than the one the parents and children attend. This brings me to my second point. We know our postesses feel a good deal of responsibility about us and try to make us happy and at home with the family. We can relieve them of much of this feeling by showing we know how to use our spare time; therefore—and this is my second point—Have an interest outside your school work. In towns the trouble is there are too many interests—in the country there are also many—scouting, guiding, women's institutes, Sunday-school work, then further afield excursions on bicycle or otherwise to seek what we crave for the moment, be it picture palace or organ recital, new clothes or a missing bench mark.

In some cases the family is liable to swamp us; it finds what a good handy all-round man and maid-of-all-work a student can be, and we wake up one day to find that all our own spare time has gone and very little later we realize that our due time with the children is going also. It is difficult to pull up and start again, but a straight talk with our postess will show her our point of view, and though she may not quite agree, she will at least meet us half way.

Do not let us harbour grievances. If we have a real one let us take it to headquarters. It is the only fair thing to do, and what we should wish done to us in like case. There are some things we cannot speak about—we feel we have been slighted, not treated with due consideration and that before the children—it may be a "side slip" in good breeding—if it is a studied slight it is not the receiver of it who feels most like a worm when she goes to bed and knows she has failed and does not know how to retract.

Now to take some definite difficulties—*Nurses* are naturally not anxious to give up their beloved charges to what a nurse describes us as, "bundles of newfangled notions." By going *very* slowly and making the most of the points on which we agree and bridging the things on which we don't agree, with a little humour we can come to a fair understanding with each other and can pull happily together. As far as possible I think we should take Nurse's advice about the children's health—I find this a difficult counsel to carry out, for personally, I am so confident that I know more about health than anyone else!

*Servants*. Is it not generally our own fault if we get into difficulties with them. They have a right to expect that we and the children keep our own things tidy in bedrooms and schoolroom. On the other hand we ought to expect and see we get due attendance—clean rooms and punctual meals for example. We should not ask as a favour what should be done as a duty. Let us not use our dignity to stand upon. I told a woman who has been

many years in service that I was writing this paper, and asked her advice: "Do tell them," she said, "to be just natural."

I make it a rule never to give a tip if I want to acknowledge some personal kindness or attention. I buy a present.

It is a mistake to make oneself too much at home in other people's houses, however generously the postess may seem to desire it; if we do, I think we are apt to usurp the children's rights,—it is their right to do any small offices for their parents, our part is to help them to be dependable.

Is it not generally a lack of imagination or sense of humour that makes difficulties out of trifles? But even here we have not come to bedrock. Would it not be an enormous help to wear always our badges and to try and realize what they stand for?

Go, then, and see thou gird this one about  
With a smooth rush, and that thou wash his face,  
So that thou cleanse away all stain therefrom.  
This little island round about its base,  
Below there, yonder where the billow beats it,  
Doth rushes bear upon its washy ooze;  
No other plant that putteth forth the leaf,  
Or that doth indurate, can there have life,  
Because it yieldeth not unto the shocks.

Then came we down upon the desert shore.

There he begirt me as the other pleased;  
O marvellous! for even as he culled  
The humble plant, such it sprang up again,  
Suddenly there where he uprooted it.

Here we get the idea of the yielding rush incapable alike of self-assertion and of receiving the wounds and scars of mortification. The waves that beat upon the desert shore are the waves of our badge, and remind us of the "waves of this troublesome world."

HARRIET SMEETON.

## HOW TO KEEP UP TO DATE.

This short paper is a plea on behalf of those students whose posts are in out-of-the-way places, and who, in consequence, have very little chance of meeting those interested in education—students or otherwise. It is difficult for those of you who have posts in or near towns to realize fully what this means. The Ambleside Conference, in a measure provides the necessary stimulus, but if anything happens to prevent one attending it, that means three years elapse before there is again a chance of such a meeting. Therefore



we propose that every alternate year with the Conference, holiday courses should be held at different centres throughout the kingdom. It is not everyone who can afford the huge railway fares from the North of England and Scotland to London to attend a conference there, especially if one desires to attend the Ambleside Students' Conference as well. By having different centres throughout the country students would be able to meet and work together without undue expense. Holiday courses should be arranged either by committees of students, or existing holiday courses should be attended by groups of students. To be thoroughly profitable it would be necessary for students to attend these existing courses in groups, because besides gaining from the course itself, we require the stimulus which is given to our P.N.E.U. principles by intercourse with our fellow-students. Our object in suggesting these holiday courses is three-fold.

1. Our programme is so varied that it is impossible for each one of us to keep ourselves up to date in every subject. Therefore *we want to be brushed up in the latest methods of teaching, especially in mathematics and languages.* One subject in which from the examiner's report the whole school is seen to be weak is mathematics. A fortnight of real study in this subject in all its branches under a competent master should surely help us towards improving this state of things. It is unpleasant to hear mothers comment on our weakness in this branch of our work, and very detrimental to the P.U.S. It is clearly our business to do all we can to raise our mathematical standard to the level of our English standard, which is, we make bold to say, above criticism. Were an English competition arranged between an average school-child and an average P.U.S. child, the latter would without fail come out victorious; but if the competition were in mathematics the P.U.S. child would lose heavily. Let us see if we cannot raise our mathematical standard. Languages also require similar attention, especially conversational French. Having no opportunity of speaking French with a native of that country and hearing nothing but our pupils' feeble efforts, our own pronunciation becomes warped.

2. *We wish to glean fresh ideas regarding handicrafts, games, dancing, physical exercise and singing.* As a relaxation the evening might profitably be spent in lessons in Morris and country dancing, physical exercises, indoor and outdoor games, singing or handicrafts. For all of these we are continually requiring fresh ideas. Who does not know the anxiety of finding suitable, varied and original Christmas presents for our children to make, year after year. How grateful we should be for any fresh ideas. Again, how difficult it is to find new and amusing games for two or three children to play. There are plenty of games for a number of children.

3. *We wish to refresh ourselves in the P.N.E.U. atmosphere by intercourse with fellow students.* We all know how much refreshed we feel by the Conference, and with what new vigour we go back to our work. Therefore it seems all the more necessary to have

a yearly meeting as our work would surely be greatly improved by it.

#### Books.

Books are another means of keeping up to date, but the difficulty is to get hold of good modern books when one is far away from town libraries and cannot afford to buy all the latest books on the subjects in which one is interested. Also it is difficult to know which are the best books to read and which are sheer waste of time. The National Home-Reading Union set a syllabus of reading for the winter months which is of a wide and varied nature, and many of the books which they set can be borrowed from their lending library on payment of a very small fee and the postage of the book borrowed. There are three reading sections, each with its own entrance fee. The Young People's Course, of which the subscription is 1/6. The General Course (2/6) comprising this year, books on the Gospels, Picture Study, Darwin and his writings, our Allies—Italy, etc. The Special Course (3/6) studying American Politics, Architecture, Agriculture, etc.

A magazine with articles on all the subjects set for reading is published in connection with the three courses, and questions and subjects for debates are appended to each article. There are no rules as to which subject you shall read up or how many books on it you shall read. The reader is absolutely free and can follow whatever course or part of a course she chooses.

Another suggestion is that we should have a magazine club run by different students in different parts of the country from which on payment of a subscription we could get in rotation such magazines as *Nineteenth Century*, *Blackwood's*, *The Round Table*, *The Contemporary*, etc. In that way we should be kept in touch with the latest thought of the day.

The College by Post has as its aim the systematic study of the Bible, and also the teaching of those who wish to continue their studies under guidance and have little opportunity of obtaining professional tuition. The fundamental rule is that each member must give half an hour every day to Bible study and at least four hours a week to secular study if she joins one class, and seven hours if she joins more than one. The secular classes are the following:—English Literature and History, English Language and Composition, Greek, Latin, Hebrew, French, German, Italian, Arithmetic, Mathematics, Botany, Natural History, Hygiene, Theory of Music.

The year is divided into three terms, beginning February 1st, June 1st, October 10th, and ending May 24th, September 30th, January 24th. Ten weeks' holiday besides may be taken (not less than a week at a time) during the year. There is a lending library for students. The only subscriptions required are 2/6 entrance fee and 1/6 for each Scripture and secular class joined. Examination papers are sent out in the course of the term and when corrected are then sent back to the student.

B. S. MOFFATT.  
J. R. SMITH.